

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

In that all equipment produced will need to be compliant, otherwise the intention of the flag will be thwarted, this means a very heavy hand in the marketplace of innovation in software and hardware. This level of intervention is on the same plane as the old Soviet system of command and control. Best case it could result in large scale public disobedience and revulsion for the organization (FCC) implementing such rules. Worst case, it will have the same effect on competition and innovation that the Soviet system did--ie; it killed it. Capital, both intellectual and monetary will flow to other regimes that don't place such a dead hand on innovation.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices? By interfering with today's notion of fair use, the broadcast flag would by it's very nature, have to limit consumer's ability to send their content between different devices.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

Yes, because such equipment can not be allowed to communicate with compliant equipment, for to do so risks the transferring of flagged data to legacy equipment where it could be transfered to other legacy devices.

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?

Absolutely! The analogy is at the start of the automobile industry to have put the buggy whip industry in control of transportation policy. I'm pretty sure that had that scenario happened, we wouldn't see too many freeways today.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?

Unknowable, but large. What was the cost to the Russian economy of the roughly 70 years of the Soviet command and control system? Enormous, and unknowable. But ask yourself this: where would Russia be today if they hadn't experimented with such a destructive ideology? We are on the cusp of making the same mistake, favoring broken business models instead of adapting to the new technology landscape of digital devices seamlessly connected. It can be argued that Russia did the same in response to the Industrial Revolution (read Chekov if you doubt me) and paid an extremely high price for sticking their head in the sand for 70 years. Let's not make the same mistake they did.